

Shelter Success Simplified

1-2-3 Go! (Sept. 28, 2020)

Welcome to the Shelter Success Simplified e-newsletter of concise ideas, inspiration, and actions for animal welfare leaders and managers – and those who aspire to be!

1 – Quote to Inspire

- “Vision is the bottleneck of talent. Most talent is wasted because people do not clearly know what they want. It’s not a lack of effort, but a lack of direction. There are many capable people in the world, but relatively few that focus on what matters.” ~ **James Clear**, author of “Atomic Habits”

2 – Ideas to Consider

- **You help people, too:** Your community knows that your work helps animals, but do they know that your work also helps people? The animal-human bond is well-documented for its people benefits: increased exercise, decreased depression, fewer allergies, and more. How could sharing stories about the ways pets have improved adopters’ lives change how the community views your organization’s influence? (Learn more with [Carol Novello on podcast Episode 18.](#))
- **Engage all your community:** It’s likely there are areas of your community that have high admissions yet low rates of adoption and volunteer engagement. About such areas, we can be sure of two things: Animal lovers live there, and some would be willing to help. How to find and engage these people? Join or create a social media group about animals for target areas. Or reach out to community leaders and ask them to put you in touch with animal people in the neighborhood. You may find potential partners you can support to help expand the local safety net for pets.

3 – Actions to Try

- **Create guideposts:** Take an hour to define the focus of your organization’s work (how you will achieve your mission) in a few easy-to-understand, concise bullet points that will serve as daily guideposts for staff and volunteers. Review and refine these with your leadership team and create a plan to share and reinforce them with the whole team. Examples:
 - Deliver high quality customer service.
 - Create lifesaving solutions for animals.
- **Look with fresh eyes:** It’s easy to become accustomed to slow deterioration: trash in the parking lot, accumulated clutter at the front desk, or text wrapping awkwardly on your website’s home page. While we might get used to them, they can affect the impression created for potential supporters. One way to see with fresh eyes is to imagine giving a building tour to a

picky relative or sending them a link to your site – then imagine evaluating the building or website through their eyes. (See Humane Network’s [walk-through checklist here](#).)

- **Behind the numbers:** Is your organization struggling to meet a specific metric goal? Sometimes taking a closer look at the process with your team can help. Examples:
 - Want to retain your top volunteers or recruit more? Consider asking your volunteers about why they volunteer and what their volunteer experience was like. A simple survey or facilitated virtual focus group can provide insights to guide your retention and recruitment efforts.
 - Want to decrease length of stay? Dig into how much of an animal’s total time in the shelter is spent at each step – admission, spay/neuter, adoption promotion, and the adoption process itself. Then work with those on the front lines to find out what would reduce time in areas where there tend to be delays.

Check out these new episodes of the Shelter Success Simplified podcast:

- **How to better engage your community with storytelling about the human-animal bond:** Carol Novello, author of “Mutual Rescue,” on [Episode 18](#)
- **Ideas for animal shelter and rescue leaders to do now:** Francis Battista of Best Friends Animal Society on [Episode 17](#)
- **How animal welfare organizations can improve access to veterinary care in their communities:** Aimee St.Arnaud of Open Door Veterinary Care and Community Pet Care Clinic on [Episode 16](#)

Wish you could hand off your holiday fundraising campaign? Struggling to manage your workload? We help shelters and rescue groups with fundraising, action planning, operational improvements, and more. [Request a free 30-minute consultation](#).

~ Mark Robison, newsletter editor and Humane Network senior consultant

P.S. [The chase is on](#).



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